

From: Wim Coekaerts
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/8/01 11:45am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Hi -

After reading the proposed settlement (Final Judgement), I cannot see how any of this means microsoft has been punished or found guilty of violating antitrust laws. The only thing that is very obvious about the proposal is that Microsoft came out as a winner, not as the guilty party, and this will make them stronger and gives them a wildcard to do even more harm to bigger companies like IBM, Oracle, Sun and everyone else that competes with Microsoft.

I agree in general that the government should not interfere too much with how business is run and allow for competition but in this case they totally destroyed a big company (whether or not Netscape made good or bad business decisions around this is not really the point, the point is that microsoft used their power to trash Netscape and netscape tried to find a way out but got squashed.)

It was also very clear in the case that Bill Gates was holding back information, not cooperating and being very arrogant, which he got reprimanded for, but ultimately gets away with. This alone shows how strong they feel, even in such a big and important case, that the current legislature will leave them alone.

I am a consumer, so far, microsoft has not released one product that works as advertised, that is the least bit open, in every case where they supposedly support a standard, they find a way to make it just incompatible with competing products. Yet, many companies I would like to buy something from, are forced to use Microsoft only products when you purchase something (dell, compaq etc), yes they do offer some alternatives, but not to consumers for instance.

Do I want the company to go away ? No.. But I was hoping there would be a fair trial, and a fair settlement or punishment. Not a hidden present for destroying companies that started the whole internet revolution (which microsoft at first thought was totally stupid...)

So is this tomorrow's world ? Break the law, do it at such a large scale that thousands of jobs are lost, go to court and get rewarded for it ? The day this proposal was released was a sad day.

Sincerely,
Wim Coekaerts